

Message Text

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FOL REPEAT SANTIAGO 10826 ACTION SECSTATE INFO LA PAZ
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QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SANTIAGO 10826

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, SREF, BL, CI

SUBJECT: STATUS OF BOLIVIAN REFUGEES IN SOUTHERN CHILE

REF: A) SANTIAGO 10722 B) SANTIAGO 1520 C) SANTIAGO 7304

1. EMBOFFS MET WITH FONMINISTRY OFICIALS (DEPUTY FOR INTER-
NATIONAL AFFAIRS HERNAN SANCHEZ AND SOUTH AND NORTH AMERICAN DESK
OFFICERS) ON NOVEMBER 9. WE GAVE THEM COPY OF DIUGUID "WASHINGTON
POST" ARTICLE DESCRIBING PLIGHT OF 49 BOLIVIAN EXPULSED TO CHILE IN
LATE JUNE AND EARLY JULY.

2. SANCHEZ SAID HE WAS GENERALLY FAMILIAR WITH THE PROBLEM,
ALTHOUGH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HAD JURISDICTION OVER REFUGEES.
IN SUM, GOC HAD PROMISED THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT THAT EXILES
WOULD BE KEPT UNDER CONTROL. ITS EXPERIENCE WITH SMALLER GROUP
OF BOLIVIAN WHO ARRIVED IN MARCH AND REMAINED IN SANTIAGO HAD
BEEN UNPLEASANT (REFS B AND C). THUS, IT WAS NOT ABOUT TO KEEP
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THE MID-YEAR ARRIVALS IN THE CAPITOL. SANCHEZ JUSTIFIED GOC'S

REQUIREMENT FOR TWICE-DAILY CHECK-INS WITH POLICE AND PLACEMENT IN
REMOTE LOCATIONS ON PROMISES MADE TO THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT
THAT REFUGEES WOULD NOT CAUSE TROUBLE.EMBOFF OBSERVED THAT CONVENTION

ON REFUGEES OBLIGES RECEIVING STATE TO ALLOW REFUGEES SAME FREEDOM
OF MOVEMENT AS ACCORDED OTHER FOREIGNERS RESIDING IN THAT STATE.

3. SANCHEZ SAID THAT THE RUFUGEES HAD GREATLY EXAGGEREATED
THEIR PLIGHT. SEVERAL MONTHS AGO THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HAD
CONFIRMED THAT NONE WAS SERIOUSLY AILING AND, SAID SANCHEZ, THE
TOWNS WERE NOT AS DESOLATE AS DEPICTED. CLEARLY, HE SAID, CHILE
HAD NO SITES SAFELY REMOVED FROM THE BOLIVAIN FRONTIER WHICH
DUPLICATED
THEIR HOME CLIMATE. NATURALLY, HE CONTINUED, CHILE'S ENEMIES
PLANNED TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS ISSUE TO UNFARILY ATTACK CHILE,
WHICH AFTER ALL WAS JUST TRYING TO DO A FAVOR FOR A FRIENDLY
NEIGHBORING COUNTRY. HE OPINED THAT CHILE SHOULD NOT TAKE IN
REFUGEES IN THE FUTURE.

4. SANCHEZ PLACED MOST OF THE BLAME ON THE UNHCR WHICH, HE
ALLEGED, ONLY RECENTLY HAD BEGUN TO TANKE AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN
THE CASE. HE CONTENDED IT WAS UP TO THE UNHCR TO HELP THE GOC
MAINTAIN THE REFUGEES AND SETTLE THEM OUTSIDE OF CHILE IF THEY WERE
NOT HAPPY HERE. SANCHEZ SAID HE WOULD INQUIRE OF INTERIOR
MINISTRY ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNHCR AND
ON THE CONDITION OF THE REFUGEES.

5. EMBOFFS THANKED SANCHEZ FOR PRESENTATION. THEY NOTED
THAT WHILE REFUTEES WERE SEEKING TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THEIR SITUATION
AND WHILE UNHCR MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN AS ACTIVE IN MONITERING
THEIR CONDITION AS IT MIGHT, NONETHELESS CHILE COULD EXPECT TO BE
CRITICIZED IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES. EMBASSY WAS ONLY FOLLOWING UP
DEPARTMENT INSTRUCTION TO CHECK ACCURACY OF "WASHINGTON POST"
STORY, BUT EMBOFF, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, BELIEVED IT MIGHT BE USEFUL
FOR GOC, IN BLUNTING CHARGES SURE TO BE LEVELLED AT IT, TO MOVE
REFUGEES TO LARGER TOWNS WHERE MEDICAL FACILITIES AND OTHER
ACCOUTREMENTS WERE MORE READILYAVAILABLE. SANCHEZ WAS NOT
PLEASED WITH THE THOUGHT.
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Message Attributes

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